



Technology Innovation Showcase 2012



Georgia Beach Water Quality Department of Natural Resources

The water along Georgia's coast is regularly tested for the presence of potentially harmful bacteria, and the Department of Natural Resources has created a web application that provides real-time information to the public about the quality of water at our beaches. The application notifies the public in the event a water-quality advisory is required. The application uses a geospatial display of Georgia's coastline and colored dots to indicate the most recent water-quality test results. The application provides a map or an aerial view with zoom and pan features and detailed information for each beach location. If a water-quality advisory is issued for a beach, a yellow dot is displayed. If the beach is closed, a red dot is displayed.

DNR's Coastal Resources Division posts announcements on its web site and uses RSS feeds to make the public aware of water-quality advisories, but you need to know the names of beaches or their addresses for the announcements to be useful. The geospatial application provides map-based advisories. Beach goers can quickly and easily know the water quality at beaches throughout the state and make informed decisions about which beaches to visit.

Besides the positive impact on public health by providing real-time information about water quality, the application also reduces ongoing operational requirements for CRD staff – an estimated 150 staff hours per year. At a time when resources are severely strained due to budget restrictions, CRD can redirect those scarce resources to areas as needed and thereby provide better overall support to Georgians.

The application is the first of many proposed steps at DNR to ensure the availability of easily accessible, real-time information to the public, and it begins to build a platform that supports a more mobile citizenry.